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Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 05419 100455Z

15
ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-11 RSC-01 DRC-01 /024 W
---------- 081686
R 100401Z DEC 73
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5636
INFO AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA

UNCLAS JIDDA 5419

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP, SA
SUBJ: COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT TRADE MISSION

REF: STATE 197856

1. ACCURATE JUDGEMENTS ABOUT RELATIVE SALES POTENTIAL FOR VARIOUS CATEGORIES LISTED REFTEL DIFFICULT BECAUSE IT IS NOT CLEAR TO WHAT EXTENT PROCUREMENT FOR VARIOUS MAJOR PROJECTS WILL BE PREEMPTED BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS OF PRIME CONTRACTORS OR BY COMPATIBILITY PROBLEMS IN THE CASE OF EUROPEAN CONTRACTORS ETC. FOR EXAMPLE, SAG DECISION TO ADOPT FRENCH SECAM FOR COLOR TV PRESUMABLY ELIMINATES OPPORTUNITIES FOR AUXILIARY TV BROADCASTING EQUIPMENT; BUT WE ARE UNABLE TO MAKE ANY SORT OF TECHNICAL JUDGMENTS AS TO WHETHER THERE IS ROOM FOR AUXILIARY U.S. EQUIPMENT (TELEPHONE EXCHANGES, ETC.) TO OPERATE OFF THE "BACKBONE" TELECOMMUNICATIONS TRUNK LINE PRESENTLY BEING BUILT BY ITALIAN FIRM.

2. IN VIEW OF LACK OF TIME AND TECHNICAL EXPERTISE TO MAKE JUDGEMENTS ON SUCH ISSUES AS ABOVE, WE ARE LISTING CATEGORIES ACCORDING TO POTENTIAL IN TERMS OF UPCOMING MAJOR PROJECTS ONLY, BUT FLAGGING WITH "Q" CATERORIES WHERE UNPREDICTABLE COMPATIBILITY OR PRIME CONTRACTOR INTERESTS MIGHT MAKE QUESTION-ABLE ACTUAL SALES POTENTIAL AS FAR AS MISSION MEMBERS CONCERNED.
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PAGE 02 JIDDA 05419 100455Z

THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT SAG PROGRAMS WHICH SHOULD GENERATE

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

SUCH POTENTIAL ARE: (A) DEVELOPMENT OF A COUNTRYWIDE TELE-
COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM; (B) AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT--THE NEW JIDDA
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN NEAR FUTURE AND NEW IRYADH AIRPORT
IN ABOUT FIVE YEARS, PLUS SEVERAL REGIONAL FIELDS--WITH
REQUIREMENTS FOR RADAR, GROUND-TO-AIR COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.;
AND (C) MODERNIZATION OF SAUDI ARMED FORCES AND NATIONAL GUARD.

3. A. MOST PROMISING:

(1) TELEPHONE SWITCHBOARDS AND SWITCHING DEVICES (Q);
(2) TELEPHONE, WIRE APPARATUS AND EQUIPMENT (Q);
(3) MICROWAVE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT (Q);
(4) ELECTRONIC SEARCH AND ETECTION APPARATUS, INCLUDING
RADAR (Q);
(5) MOBILE COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT;
(6) SINGLE BAND, HIGH FREQUENCY TRANSCEIVERS; AND
(7) PARTS AND ACCESSORIES FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIP-
MENT, N.E.C. (Q).

B. MODERATE:

(1) TV AND RADIO BROADCAST PARTS AND ACCESSORIES;
(2) ELECTRONIC NAVIGATIONAL AIDS (Q);
(3) RADIO AND TV BROADCAST AUDIO EQUIPMENT; AND
(4) CLOSED-CIRCUIT TV SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT.

C. LIMITED POTENTIAL:

(1) AS NOTED IN PARA ONE, SAG DECISION TO ADOPT SECAM SYSTEM
FOR COLOR TV WILL ELIMINATE OPPORTUNITIES IN TELEVISION
AREA TO EXTENT THAT COMPATIBILITY IS A PROBLEM.
(2) BASIC SAUDI RADIO BROADCAST SYSTEM IS IN PLACE, WITH
LITTLE PROSPECT FOR FURTHER EXPANSION. HOWEVER, THERE
MAY BE SOME FURTHER POTENTIAL FOR FM EQUIPMENT, AND
PERHAPS FOR REPLACEMENT PARTS AND UPGRADING.
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Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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